

## ADULT'S ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE AND UNDERSTAND THE ADVERTISING MESSAGES: AN ADVERTISING LITERACY STUDY

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### **Abstract**

*At this time, when our lives are being so hurdle. Every day we receive a bulk of information through different media platforms. And advertisement is one of them which seek the attention of everybody and influence the buyers to buy different types of products. So, advertising literacy plays a very crucial role to solve this problem. As per consumer requirements, advertising literacy plays a very important role in educating consumers about the advertisement. This study examines the recognizing and understanding ability of adults about the advertising message and to what extent they use their knowledge about advertisement. In this survey 400 respondents, including 200 male and 200 female (18-65 years). The study's findings show that in different age groups, most adults can understand and recognize the advertising message.*

**Keywords:** Adults, Recognize, understanding, media education, advertising literacy, etc.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Media is the most robust medium of information transmission for society. We all live in a world drenched with immense media messages where Media literacy provides the opportunity to the onlookers to develop some derogatory skills to keep themselves safe from the adverse effects of media. Advertising plays an indispensable role in the whole society generally in the case of business. It is a strategy for enhancing the marketing methodology and its modernization. It put forwards innovative and more effective ways of communication. One can sell the product and even with ideas using advertising. Advertising is necessary not only at the national level but on the global level as well. Providing important information, seeking attention, creating awareness, and influencing the buying behavior of consumers are the main objectives of advertising. Moreover, the fastest growing technology in the technical field is adding more spice to advertising and its planning. And no doubt, Indian advertising has obtained expeditious growth along with a well-recognized professional character. Nowadays, there is no longer an issue in accessing the information related to the advertisement, but how to use that bunch of knowledge and how to update the contents is the biggest matter of concern. According to poter, there are cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, and moral skills and knowledge necessary to deal with advertising messages in a media literate manner (Potter 2004). It provides the justification that being an advertising literate individual, is an important skill that will help society to understand and evaluate the reliability of the advertising messages. Also, media education can be defined as the ability to understand, analyze, evaluation of different aspects of different media. Media literacy is related to media education including advertising literacy, digital literacy, visual literacy, financial literacy, etc. As we know that, advertising literacy is an essential part of media education that creates the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and make a better understanding of advertisement it also a preparation for the consumer to be able to make a good decision while purchasing the product.

## DEFINITION OF ADVERTISING

Advertising can be described as a "public announcement" in its most basic form. A public announcement of a product, service, or concept through a channel to which the public has access is known as advertising. Print, electronic, or some other medium may be used. Advertising aims to attract attention to a commodity. It aims to raise awareness of the advertised product's presence. It isn't true. It disseminates product information in such a way that the prospective buyer develops an interest in the product. Advertisement can be described in several different ways. Newspapers, magazines, brochures, and fliers are examples of print advertising. That has always been a well-liked type of ideas distribution. From newspaper to fliers- all kinds of printed adverts are successful in drawing the attention of customers. Outdoor Advertisement includes Billboards, Newsstands, Tradeshows, and Events which are popular types of Advertisements. Broadcast advertising includes Television, radio, and the internet which is one of the strongest weapons of advertisement. Broadcast advertising includes television, radio, and the internet, and is one of the most powerful marketing tools available. It's also a more powerful, interactive, and simple way to get their attention and persuade them to buy the goods.

## TV ADVERTISEMENTS AND ADULTS

Television (TV) is extremely important to the country's growth. Citizens in most developed countries are well aware of the benefits of advertising and television. When it comes to India, radio and newspapers played a key role in providing information to the public in the past. Then, thanks to advances in the fastest-growing technology, television came into play, causing huge shifts in attitudes of both urban and rural citizens. And now, with the aid of television, they are kept up to date on virtually every aspect of life, literature, and science regularly. Urban and rural people have changed their attitudes towards social, economic, and political matters due to their exposure to this powerful medium. Television is the best advertising media as it advertises the products in a 3D visual manner which is much attractive and understandable as compared to other media like print and radio. Today, adults are becoming more and more demanding to fulfill their requirements. They are easily mesmerized by the different advertised products. And also TV creates temptations among them by influencing through attractive advertisements. But they easily get confused comparing specifications of similar products of a different brand. Thus, advertising literacy plays a very important role to construct the messages of the advertisements while purchasing the products of their requirement.

## ADVERTISING STRATEGIES

An understanding of the various strategies has been used by the advertisers to engage the audiences. Strategy is a key element as most of the ads are of a maximum thirty seconds time duration that's why the advertisers must use attractive factors that hit the psychology of persons of every age group who is watching that advertisement on television. Advertisers use a variety of methods to create effective advertisements. They use many kinds of appeals to convince people to buy and may present their ideas either factually or emotionally. Advertisements using emotional ways might appeal to a person's need for love, security, or prestige and suggest that the product will satisfy the need. Advertising appeals have evolved a lot over decades. Appeals selection by advertisers depends upon several factors like audience profile. For instance, there are certain types of messages which are based on technical information, logic, or argument about the product they are advertising.

However, nowadays, slogans are the most popular, innovative, and powerful way to convey the intent of a commercial. We don't need to include any information about the advertiser.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As per the topic of our concern i.e. *“Adult’s ability to Recognize and understanding of advertising messages”*, the available literature on this topic is boundless and it becomes quite difficult to concise this amount of data according to the requirements. As we use different things according to the daily basic requirements and thus advertisements play a very important role to explore these things and also help in comparing the extent of use of these things. In this era of fastest-growing technology, every platform of media is highly flooded with the different types of advertisements to a greater extent.

**Malmelin (2010)** researched this field, focusing on the concept of advertisement literacy and the dimensions of advertising literacy. Malmelin suggested a model of advertisement literacy in which informative literacy, visual literacy, rhetorical literacy, and promotional literacy were divided into four groups (2010). This article's two main goals are to expand on the idea of advertisement literacy and to present a modern paradigm of advertising literacy. This study aims to investigate the sense of advertising literacy and to describe the different perspectives from which it can be approached. Taken into account the modern advertising literacy model will be used in advertising studies, media education, and other areas.

**Rozendaal (2011)** suggested a three-dimensional conceptualization of children's advertisement literacy, based on a report that found that the definition of advertising literacy needs to be expanded. Advertising literacy (recognition of advertising, understanding of selling intent, recognition of advertising's source, perception of the intended audience, and understanding of the intended audience persuasion intent, tactics, and prejudice in advertising), advertising literacy success (retrieval of advertising literacy, implementation of advertising literacy), and attitudinal advertising literacy (skepticism about advertising, disliking of advertising) By presenting various facets of advertisement literacy, this research served as a leading characteristic for the current study.

**Rotimi Williams Olatunji and Omoye Akhagba (2013)** conduct a report titled "Children and Advertisement Literacy: A Review of Selected Lagos Schools," this research aims to find out how children interpret advertising signals and what important consequences they have. Six focus group discussion sessions with a total of ten participants were held with students aged 10 to 13 in Lagos Metropolitan. Purposefully drawn school samples were used, while respondents were chosen using a simple random procedure. The descriptive approach was used to interpret the data. It was discovered that children aged 10 to 12 can perceive the advertiser's meaning and distinguish between the fictional world and the world of fact shown in the commercials they watch. . Advertising informs them about service and also educates them about its importance, according to the findings.

**Fam and Waller (2006)** The aim of this paper is to present the results of a cross-cultural qualitative analysis conducted in five Asian cities (Hong Kong, Shanghai, Jakarta, Bangkok, and Mumbai) to examine Asian consumers' attitudes toward television advertising in their respective countries/cities. Design, technique, and strategy - Two focus group interviews (1

male and 1 female) were conducted in each area, yielding the results. The interview lasted between 40 and 60 minutes and each party consisted of eight people. Several of the most famous locally made tv advertisements were shown to the participants in each focus group, and the conversation that followed focused on the visual representations that they enjoyed the most. Findings - There were variations in the likable attributes between the five cities, according to the findings. To recognize cross-cultural variations in the concept of advertisement likeability, this analysis relies on informant-driven data rather than researcher-driven data. Furthermore, it implies that qualitative analysis can provide useful findings for international organizations. Marketers and those interested in gaining a greater understanding of new opportunities should analyze the findings while bearing in mind the country's cultural background, such as rituals, practices, beliefs, and faiths.

**Ms. Hemamalini. K.S\*, Kala Kurup\* 2014** To find out how successful tv commercials are from the viewpoint of teenagers. To see how the three distinct factors (i.e., Involvement, Message, and Celebrity) have a serious association with a tv commercial regarding teenagers' shopping intentions. In this case, a technique was used. To see whether there are any important relationships between the dependent variable purchasing purpose and the independent variables presence, post, and celebrity, three hypotheses were identified. The analysis aims to determine the impact of television ads on respondents' buying intentions. The study's data analysis and the sample size were based on primary data i. secondary The research had a sample size of 50 respondents, who were college undergraduates and postgraduate students. The findings of this report reveal that television advertisements are successful in persuading adolescents to make purchases, and the research predicts that television advertisements would have a positive influence on consumer attention and this has a strong impact on their ability to buy or their confidence in buying.

## METHODOLOGY

Earlier studies measuring advertising messages simply by asking them about advertisement through survey focus group etc. in this study, a total of 400 adults from four districts of Haryana participated in the survey. Keeping in view the main objectives of the research, the outline of the survey was prepared in such a way that the perception of adults about the TV advertisements. Many efforts were made to learn about the various aspects of tv advertising. In light of these considerations, the survey's structure was created following Indian culture. To construct the questionnaire, the objective of the study was to check the ability of adults about advertising messages. To finalize the matter in the questionnaire, it was kept in mind how the audience makes their perception about advertisements and how they decide. In western countries, many studies have been conducted on this subject, but in India, only a very few studies have so far been conducted. Therefore, questions were made, keeping in mind the Indian context. Questions in the questionnaire are open-ended and close-ended. At the beginning of the questionnaire, such questions were framed, which were easy for participants to answer, and, subsequently, complex questions were incorporated

### Research Questions

- To study the Recognition and Understanding of advertising Messages by Adult.
- To study the Recognition and Understanding of advertising source by Adult.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

**Table: 1 clear and accurate information**

Age	Response	Female	Percentage	Male	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	Always	10	2.5%	13	3.25%	23	5.75%
	sometime	52	13%	27	6.75%	79	19.75%
	Never	83	20.75%	57	14.25%	140	35.0%
	Total	145	36.25%	97	24.25%	242	60.5%
25-35	Always	02	0.5%	05	1.25%	07	1.75%
	sometime	10	2.5%	26	6.5%	36	9.0%
	Never	29	7.25%	29	7.25%	58	14.5%
	Total	41	10.25%	60	15%	101	25.25%
35-45	Always	00	00	03	0.75%	03	0.75%
	sometime	04	1%	08	2%	12	3.0%
	Never	05	1.25%	13	3.25%	18	4.5%
	Total	09	2.25%	24	6%	33	8.25%
45-55	Always	01	0.25%	00	00	01	0.25%
	sometime	01	0.25%	05	1.25%	06	1.5%
	Never	01	0.25%	07	1.75%	08	2.0%
	Total	03	0.75%	12	3%	15	3.75%
55-65	Always	00	00	01	0.25%	01	0.25%
	sometime	01	0.25%	02	0.5%	03	0.75%
	Never	01	0.25%	04	1%	05	1.25%
	Total	02	0.5%	07	1.75%	09	2.25%

The table depicts the extent to which the relevancy of information in television ads influenced the respondents' purchasing decisions. In the 18-25 age range, 83 percent of participants agree that advertisements cannot provide them with reliable knowledge about goods. 14.5 percent of people in the 25-35 age range agree that advertisements never provide truthful statistics. In the 35-45 age range of adults, 35-45 people, out of a total of 4.5 percent of participants, 1.25 percent of women and 2.25 percent of men, think advertisements seldom provide reliable facts about products. Just 2% of adults in the 45-55 age category claim that advertisers never provide misleading facts. 1.25 percent of the population. In the age of 55 to 65 claim ads often have factual information. The relevance of detail in television commercials has a significant impact on purchasing decisions.

**Table: 2 Type of Information**

Gender	Age	Clear and accurate	Real and factual	Quality of product	Details of product	Uses of product	Selling purpose	A good message	Merits and demerits	Others	No ans	Total
Male	18-25	24	08	06	05	03	01	06	05	08	31	97
	25-35	08	05	05	06	02	01	05	04	05	19	60
	35-45	03	02	02	02	01	00	02	02	02	08	24
	45-55	02	01	01	01	00	00	01	01	01	04	12
	55-65	01	01	00	01	00	00	01	01	01	01	07
Female	18-25	38	11	09	10	04	01	09	10	12	41	145

	25-35	07	02	02	05	02	00	03	02	03	15	41
	35-45	01	01	01	01	00	00	01	01	01	02	09
	45-55	01	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	01	02	03
	55-65	01	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	02
<b>Total</b>		<b>86</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>400</b>
<b>Percentage</b>		<b>21.5</b>	<b>7.75</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>7.75</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>30.75</b>	<b>100.</b>

Table 19 shows that 21.5 percent of 400 respondents want ads to have transparent and reliable facts. 7.75 percent of respondents, on the other hand, like facts and all information about the product in commercials. The overall number of adults aged 18 to 25 was 60 percent, with 36.25 percent females and 24.25 percent males, indicating that both male and female participants made up 6% of the total Percent female 9.5 percent want clear and accurate information about the product in ads.

**Table: 3 Understand the Source of TV Ads**

Age	Response	Female	Percentage	Male	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	Always	45	11.25%	32	8%	77	19.25%
	sometime	55	13.75%	31	7.75%	86	21.5%
	Never	45	11.25%	34	8.5%	79	19.75%
	<b>Total</b>	145	36.25%	97	24.25%	242	60.5%
25-35	Always	16	4%	25	6.25%	41	10.25%
	sometime	14	3.5%	24	6%	38	9.5%
	Never	11	2.75%	11	2.75%	22	5.5%
	<b>Total</b>	41	10.25%	60	15%	101	25.25%
35-45	Always	05	1.25%	07	1.75%	12	3.0%
	sometime	00	00	08	2%	08	2.0%
	Never	04	1%	09	2.25%	13	3.25%
	<b>Total</b>	09	2.25%	24	6%	33	8.25%
45-55	Always	00	00	00	00	00	00%
	sometime	02	0.5%	06	1.5%	08	2.0%
	Never	01	0.25%	06	1.5%	07	1.75%
	<b>Total</b>	03	0.75%	12	3%	15	3.75%
55-65	Always	00	00	00	00	00	00
	sometime	00	00	00	00	00	00
	Never	02	0.5%	07	1.75%	09	2.25%
	<b>Total</b>	02	0.5%	07	1.75%	09	2.25%

21.5 percent of participants in the 18-25 age range often understand the origins or source of advertisements relevant to product content. In the 25-35 age range, 19.75 percent, including 11.25 percent females and 8.5 percent males, never understand the origins of advertising relevant to product content. Males account for 8.25 percent of participants in the 35-45-year-old age range was a male who sometimes recognizes advertisements sources. In the 45-55 age range, 2% of participants, including 0.5 percent females and 1.5 percent males, sometimes understand the origins of advertisements relating to product content. According to the results,

only 2% of adults aged 55 to 65 never understand advertisements.

**Table: 4 Information is less and Temptations promises are more in advertisements**

Age	Response	Female	Percentage	Male	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	Always	71	17.75%	54	13.5%	125	31.25
	sometime	49	12.25%	29	7.25%	78	19.5
	Never	25	6.25%	14	3.5%	39	9.75
	<b>Total</b>	145	36.35%	97	24.25%	242	60.5
25-35	Always	22	5.5%	29	7.25%	51	12.75
	sometime	14	3.5%	25	6.25%	39	9.75
	Never	05	1.25%	06	1.5%	11	2.75
	<b>Total</b>	41	10.25%	60	15%	101	25.25
35-45	always	07	1.75%	11	2.75%	18	4.5
	sometime	01	0.25%	08	2%	09	2.25
	Never	01	0.25%	05	1.25%	06	1.5
	<b>Total</b>	09	2.25%	24	6%	33	8.25
45-55	always	03	0.75%	07	1.75%	10	2.5
	sometime	00	00	04	1%	04	1.0
	Never	00	00	01	0.25%	01	0.25
	<b>Total</b>	03	0.75%	12	3%	15	3.75
55-65	always	01	0.25%	04	1%	05	1.25
	sometime	01	0.25%	02	0.5%	03	0.75
	Never	00	00	01	0.25%	01	0.25
	<b>Total</b>	02	0.5%	07	1.75%	09	2.25

Figure related to age 18-25 adults: 19.5% participants believes that sometimes advertisements showing less information other than temptations promise are more in advertisements. In the age group of 25-35 adults, this table shows that out of 9.75% including 3.25% female and 2% male participants believes sometimes advertisements show less information than temptations promises are more. In the age group of 35-45 adults, this table shows out of total 2.25% participants including 0.25 percent female and 2 percent male participants who believe that sometimes advertisements shows less information other than temptations promise are more in advertisements. In Age group of 45-55 adults: Only 1% of male participants believe that sometimes advertisements show less information more than temptations promises. In Age group of 55-65 adults: Out of a total 0.75% including 0.25 percent female and 0.5 percent male.

**Table: 5 Read Information Carefully While Purchasing**

Age	Response	Female	Percentage	Male	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	Always	99	24.75%	57	14.25%	156	39.0
	Sometime	34	8.5%	29	7.25%	63	15.75
	Never	12	3%	11	2.75%	23	5.75
	<b>Total</b>	145	36.25	97	24.25%	242	60.5
25-35	Always	25	6.25%	40	10%	65	16.25
	Sometime	12	3%	12	3%	24	6.0
	Never	04	1%	08	2%	12	3.0
	<b>Total</b>	41	10.25%	60	15%	101	25.25
35-45	Always	07	1.75%	13	3.25%	20	5.0
	Sometime	01	0.25%	06	1.5%	07	1.75
	Never	01	0.25%	05	1.25%	06	1.5
	<b>Total</b>	09	2.25%	24	6%	33	8.25
45-55	Always	01	0.25%	05	1.25%	06	1.5
	sometime	02	0.5%	03	0.75%	05	1.25
	Never	00	00	04	1%	04	1.0
	<b>Total</b>	03	0.75%	12	3%	15	3.75
55-65	always	00	00	05	1.25%	05	1.25%
	sometime	02	0.5%	00	00	02	0.5%
	Never	00	00	02	0.5%	02	0.5%
	<b>Total</b>	02	0.5%	07	1.75%	09	2.25%

In the age group 18-25 adults, 15.75% including 8.5% female and 7.25% male participants are those who sometimes read the information carefully which is given on the product during purchasing any product. In the age group of 25-35 adults, this table shows that out of a total 6% including 3 percent female and 3 percent male participants are those who sometimes read the information carefully which is given on the product during purchasing any product. In the age group of 35-45 adults, this table shows that out of total 1.75%. Including 0.25 percent female and 1.5 percent male participants. One percent of male who never reads the information carefully during buying any product during purchasing. In the age group of 45-55 adults, this table shows that out of a total 1.25% including 5 percent female and 0.75 percent male participants are those who sometimes read the information carefully which is given on the product during purchasing any product. Another is 1 percent male who never read the information carefully which is given on the product during purchasing any product. In the age group of 55-65 adults, this table shows that out of a total of 0.5 percent female participants are those who sometimes read the information carefully which is given on the product during purchasing any product.

**RESULTS**

Most of the advertising is focused on adults because they have a great deal of spending power and also influence a large proportion of family purchases like clothes, food, beverages, and



entertainment which makes the marketers of these products target their advertising at adults. In the context of the advertising message and their recognition and understanding, the results show that a maximum (57.25%) respondent's response that the information given in the advertisements is not clear and accurate, and only (8.75%) say that the information given in advertisements is clear and accurate. (21.5%) say that information should be clear and accurate, (7.75%) say that information should be real and factual with detail of the product and also provide information about (6.5%) quality of product with (7%) good message. While on the other hand, the results show that source of Ads like (who proposed, broadcast, etc.) (35%) respondents sometimes understand the source of Ads and (32.5%) always understand the source of ads. Advertisements always play a crucial role to buy good things with accurate information here. (77%) responded that ads give us less information and more tempting promises about products. (63%) responded that they read all given information very carefully during purchasing any product. Recognition was also related to attitudes to the products in a positive manner. The results indicate that adults of every age are enough aware, recognizing, and understanding of the advertisement's message.

## CONCLUSION

- According to study, the adults think that ad never gives clear and accurate information about the product.
- Adults need different types of information like clear and accurate information, real and factual information, details about the product.
- They have also no ability to understand the sources of the advertised product.
- Adults were aware of the given temptation and less product information.
- Adults read the information very carefully while purchasing any product.
- The study found that consumer education (advertising literacy) plays a very vital role in their moral domain to construct the messages of any advertisements.
- Advertising literacy gives a chance to everyone to develop their cognitive and emotional domain that can be helpful for their emotional and thinking process.

Previous studies have been conducted on the different aspects of advertisement and their impact on consumer buying behavior. However, in this paper, we have introduced a combination of different variables like age and gender which are affecting advertising literacy. This paper examines that age and gender play a very important role in ad literacy which affects our buying habits. This will help consumers to recognize and understand the advertising messages and achieve maximum benefit from their advertisement. We believe that the study will offer a better way for both advertising scholars and consumers to understand the merits and demerits of advertising and also helps the consumers to make the right decision through advertising literacy.

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